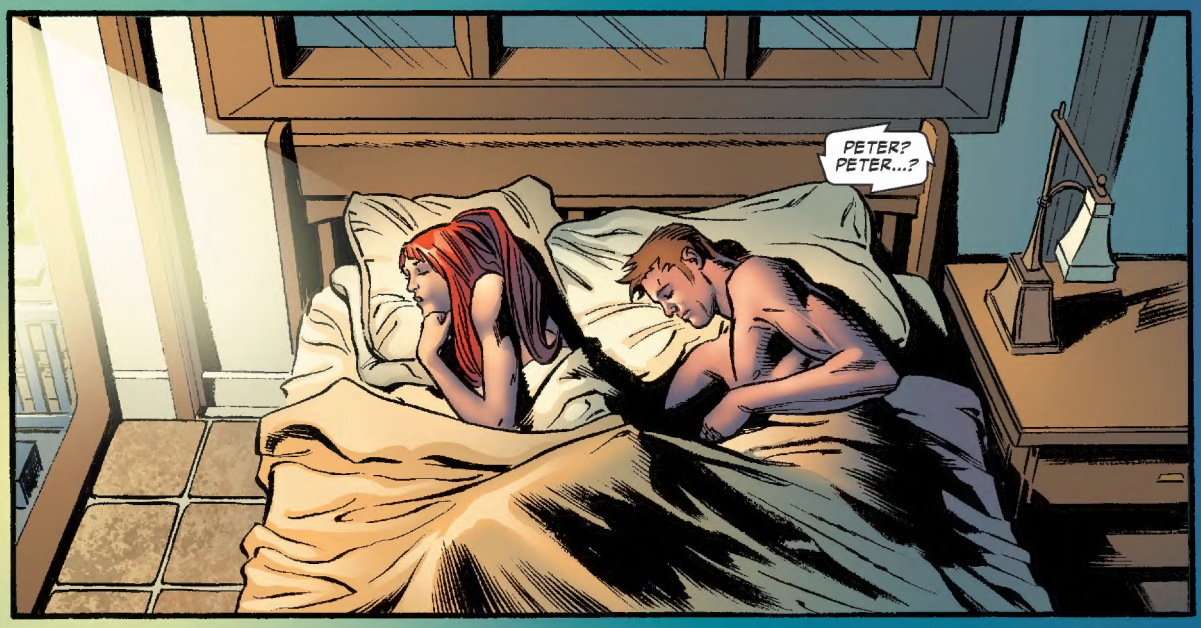
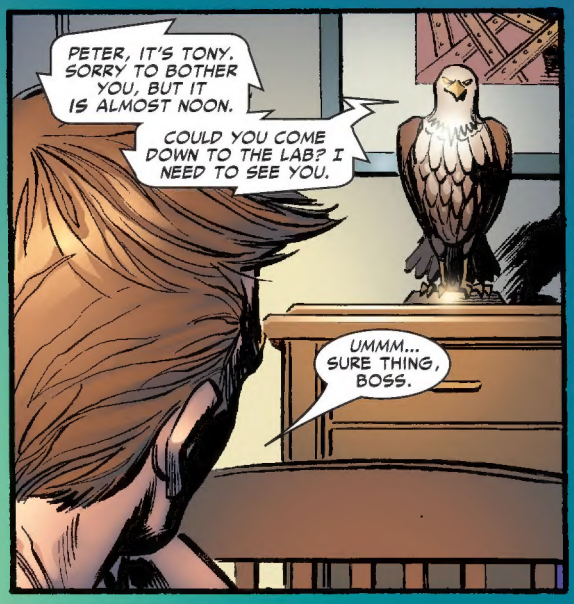
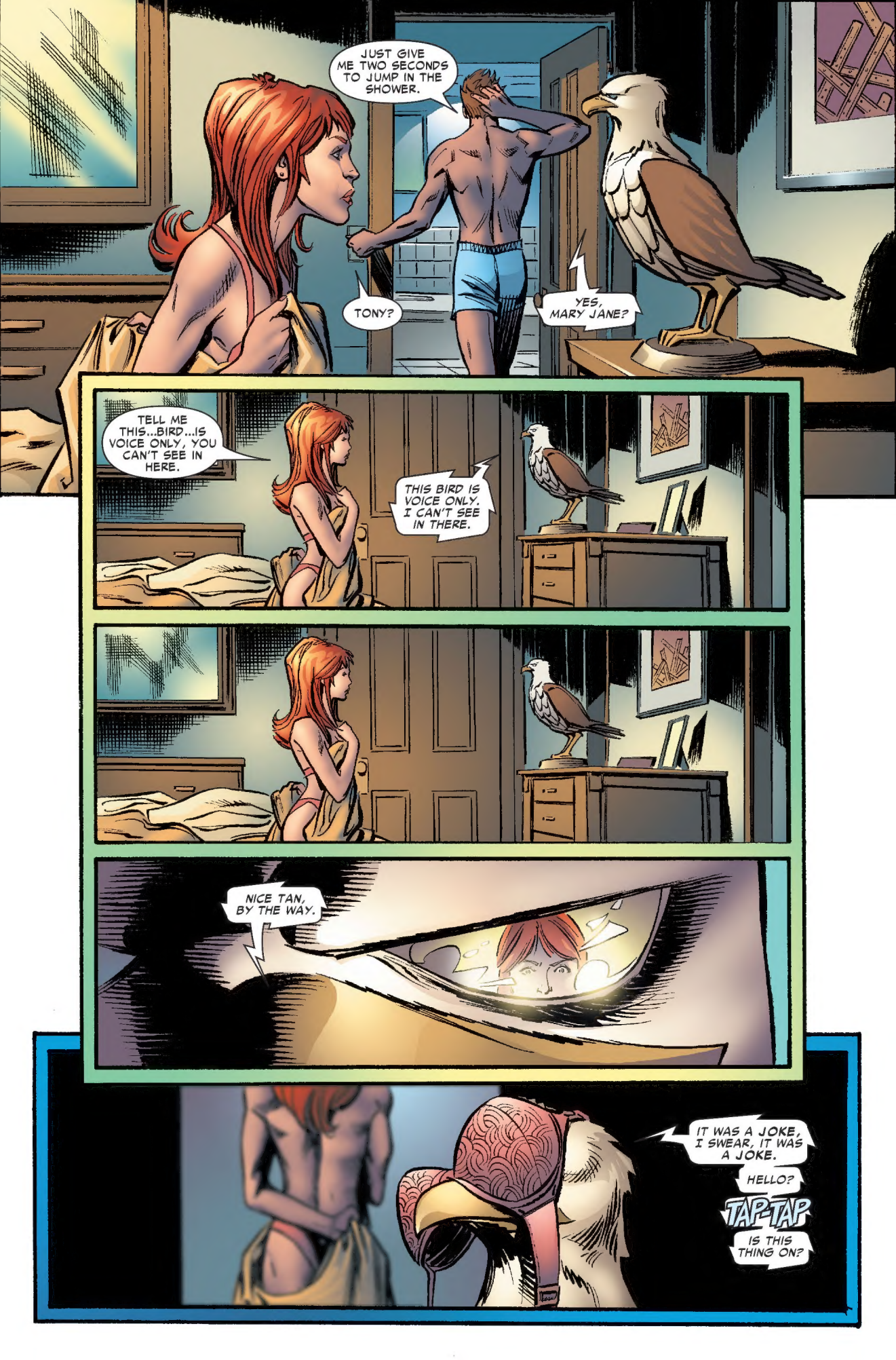
THE ROAD TO CIVIL WAR

Mr. Parker Goes to Washington

PART ONE OF THREE






JUST GIVE ME TWO SECONDS TO JUMP IN THE SHOWER.
TONY?
YES, MARY JANE?
TELL ME THIS...BIRD...IS VOICE ONLY, YOU CAN'T SEE IN HERE.
THIS BIRD IS VOICE ONLY. I CAN'T SEE IN THERE.
NICE TAN, BY THE WAY.
IT WAS A JOKE, I SWEAR, IT WAS A JOKE.
HELLO?
TAP-TAP
IS THIS THING ON?

HEY BOSS, WHAT'S UP?

YOU DO KNOW THAT EVERY TIME YOU SAY "HEY BOSS" YOU SOUND JUST LIKE CHICO MARX, RIGHT?

AND I'M TOTALLY COOL WITH THAT...AS LONG AS THAT DOESN'T MAKE YOU MARGARET DUMONT.

SO LIKE I SAID...WHAT'S UP?

I'M ALMOST DONE PUTTING THE FINAL TOUCHES TO YOUR NEW UNIFORM.

I'VE TAKEN THE OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE SOME SLIGHT... IMPROVEMENTS.

WHAT WAS WRONG WITH THE OTHER ONE?

COME ON, PETER, IT WAS JUST...*CLOTH*.

OKAY, GRANTED... I DIDN'T HAVE ANYTHING ELSE TO WORK WITH.

I KNOW.

BUT I... *DO*.

I'VE INCORPORATED MESH WEBBING THAT CAN ALLOW YOU TO GLIDE FOR SHORT DISTANCES. HEAT-RESISTANT KEVLAR MICRO-FIBER THAT CAN RESIST SMALL-CALIBER BULLETS.

BUILT-IN FIRE, POLICE AND EMERGENCY SCANNER. AUDIO AND VISUAL AMPLIFICATION, INCLUDING INFRARED AND ULTRA-VIOLET...

...CARBON FILTERS IN THE MOUTH AREA TO KEEP OUT TOXINS, AND A SHORT-RANGE GPS MICROWAVE COMMUNICATION SYSTEM, ALL ROUTED THROUGH A COMPUTERIZED CONTROL SYSTEM IN THE TITANIUM CHESTPIECE.

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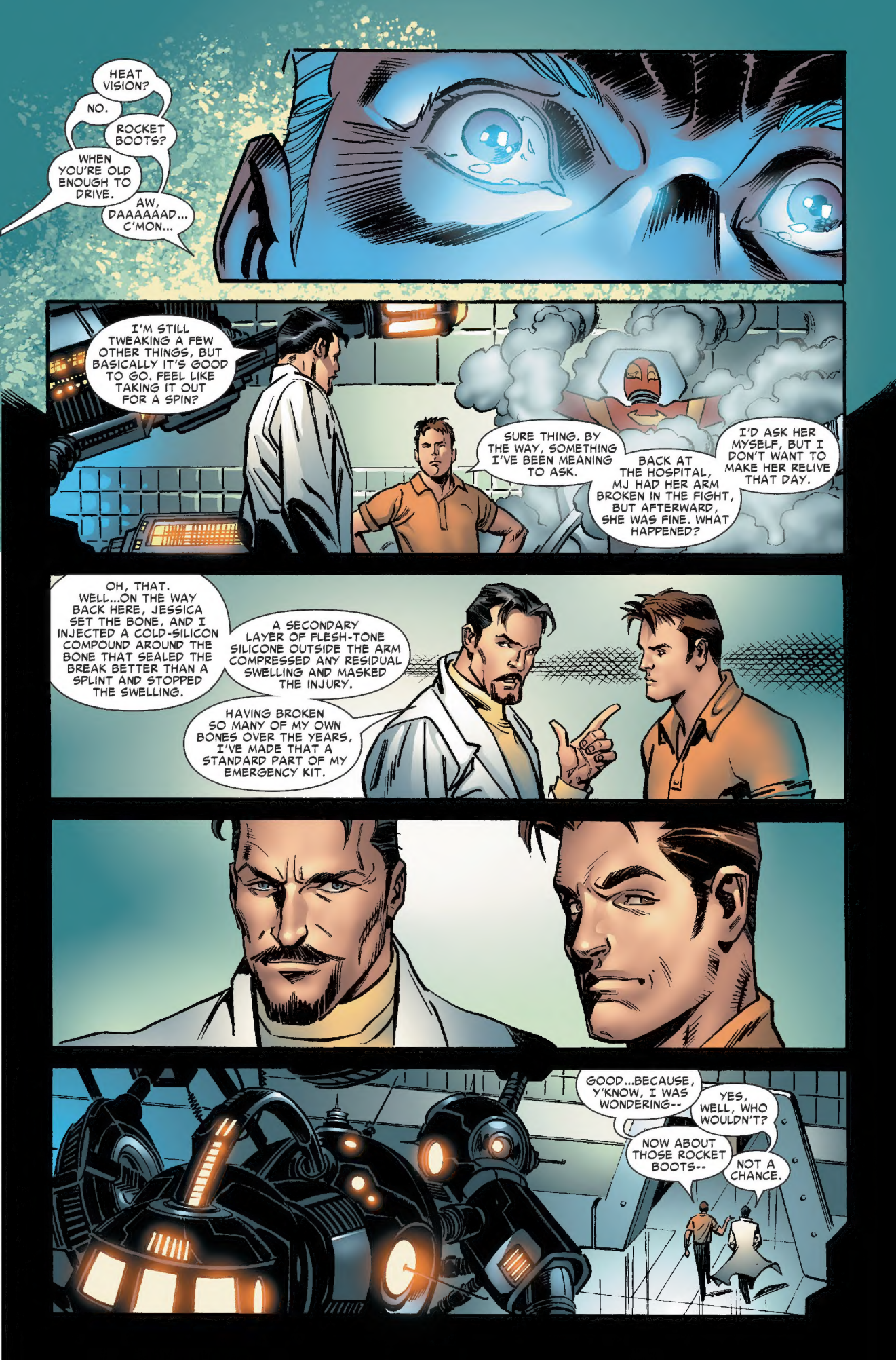
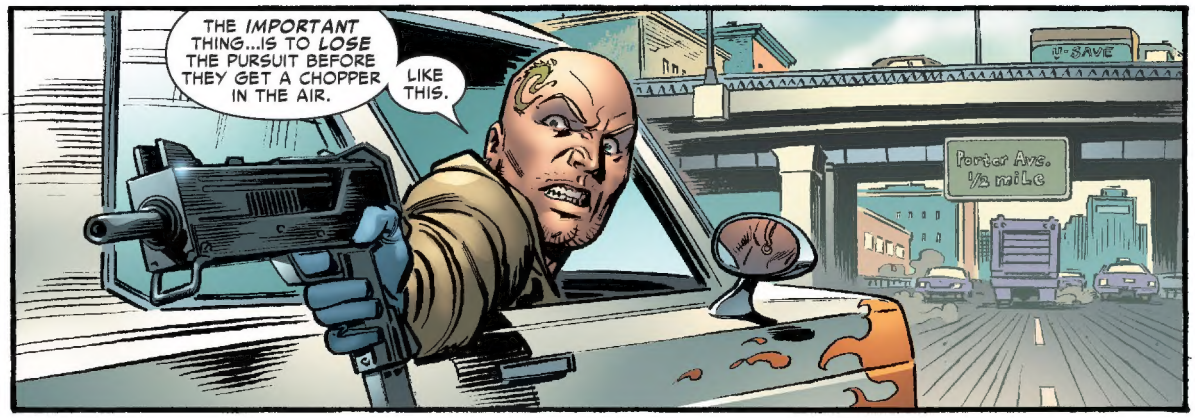
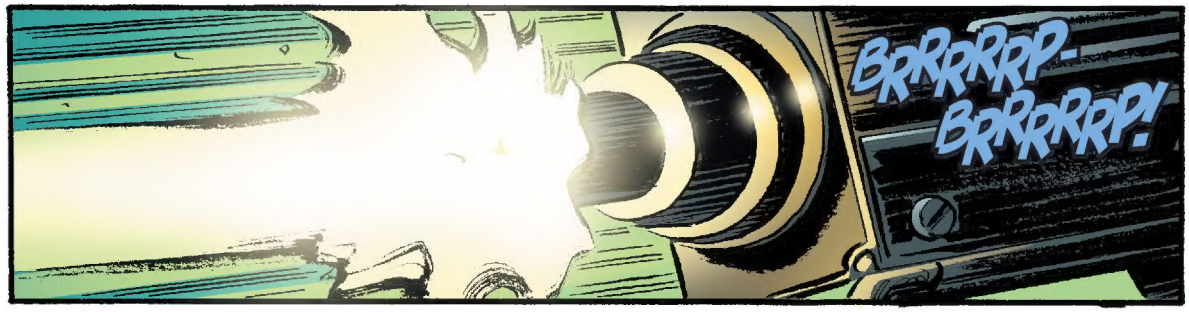
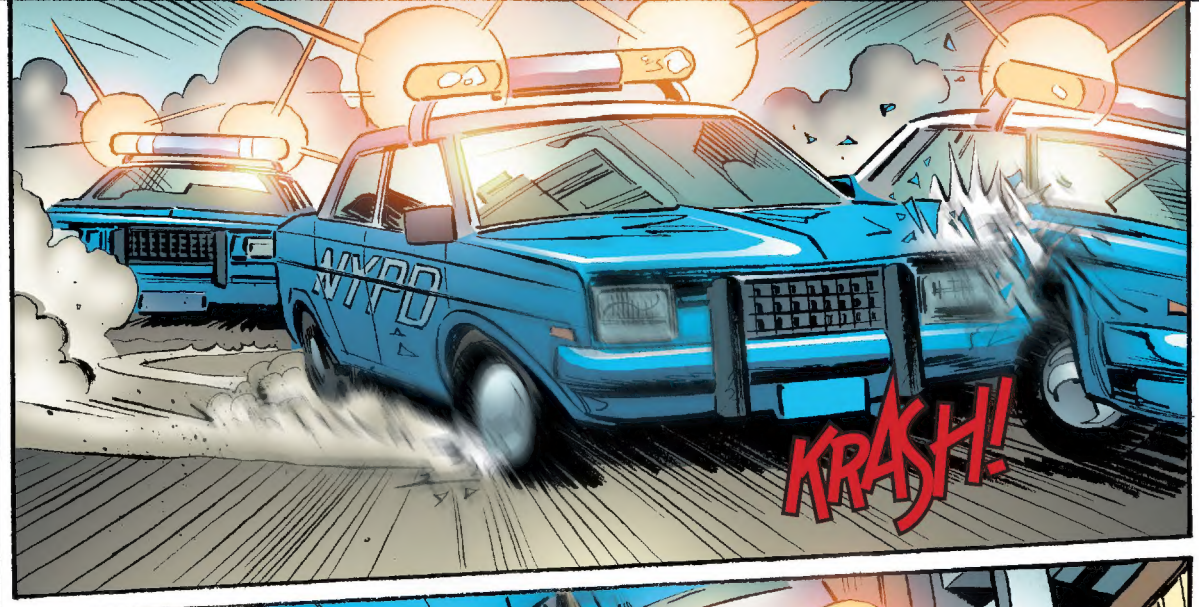

HEAT VISION?
NO.
ROCKET BOOTS?
WHEN YOU'RE OLD ENOUGH TO DRIVE.
AW, DAAAAAAD... C'MON...
I'M STILL TWEAKING A FEW OTHER THINGS, BUT BASICALLY IT'S GOOD TO GO. FEEL LIKE TAKING IT OUT FOR A SPIN?
SURE THING. BY THE WAY, SOMETHING I'VE BEEN MEANING TO ASK.
BACK AT THE HOSPITAL, MJ HAD HER ARM BROKEN IN THE FIGHT, BUT AFTERWARD, SHE WAS FINE. WHAT HAPPENED?
I'D ASK HER MYSELF, BUT I DON'T WANT TO MAKE HER RELIVE THAT DAY.
OH, THAT. WELL...ON THE WAY BACK HERE, JESSICA SET THE BONE, AND I INJECTED A COLD-SILICON COMPOUND AROUND THE BONE THAT SEALED THE BREAK BETTER THAN A SPLINT AND STOPPED THE SWELLING.
A SECONDARY LAYER OF FLESH-TONE SILICONE OUTSIDE THE ARM COMPRESSED ANY RESIDUAL SWELLING AND MASKED THE INJURY.
HAVING BROKEN SO MANY OF MY OWN BONES OVER THE YEARS, I'VE MADE THAT A STANDARD PART OF MY EMERGENCY KIT.
GOOD...BECAUSE, Y'KNOW, I WAS WONDERING--
YES, WELL, WHO WOULDN'T?
NOW ABOUT THOSE ROCKET BOOTS--
NOT A CHANCE.

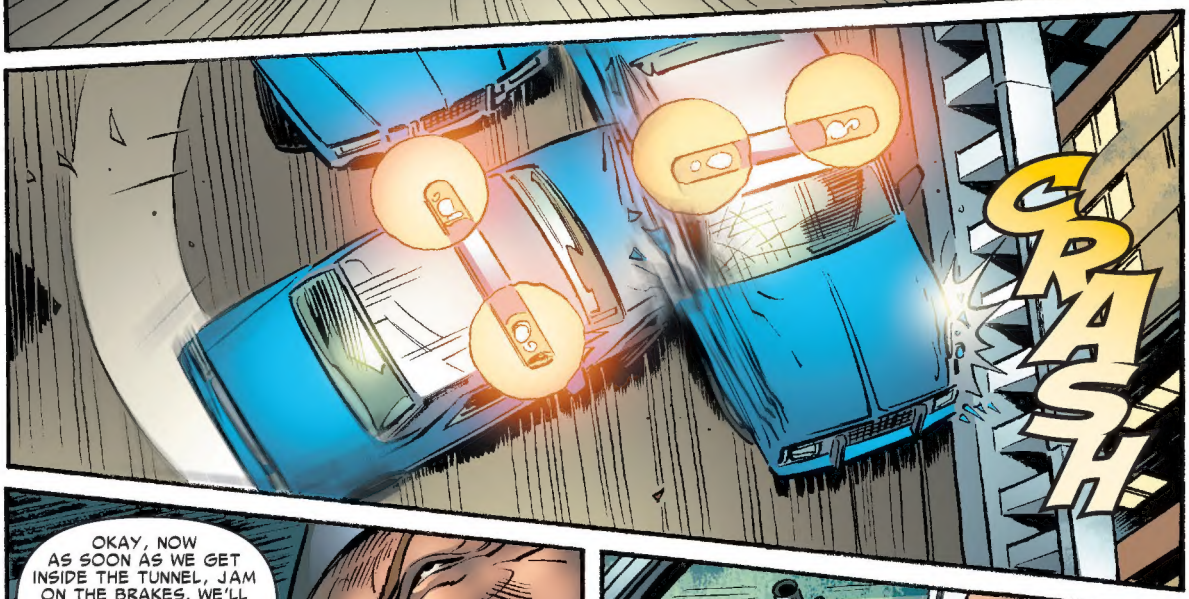
ONE HOUR LATER....
EXIT 6A
FOUR-ADAM-SEVEN, WE ARE STILL IN PURSUIT, REQUEST BACKUP, REPEAT, REQUEST BACKUP AND ROADBLOCK--
--BUT DO NOT FIRE, WE BELIEVE THE SUSPECTS HAVE A HOSTAGE--
BAD-1

WE CAN GET OFF UP THERE--
NOT A CHANCE, WHAT'RE YOU, NUTS? HAVEN'T YOU EVER SEEN COPS? IT'S WHEN YOU GET OFF THE FREEWAY AND STUCK IN TRAFFIC THAT THEY NAIL YOU.

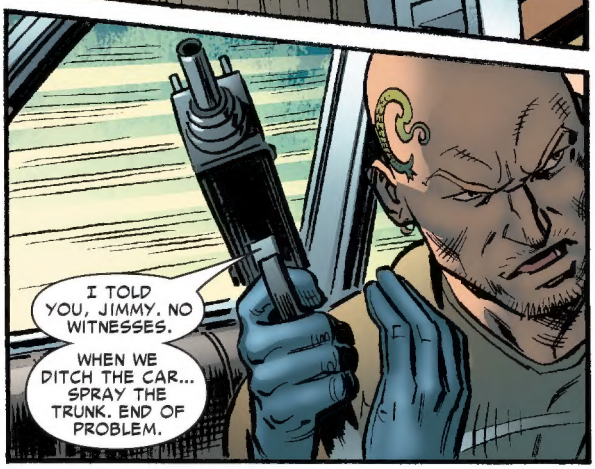

THE IMPORTANT THING...IS TO LOSE THE PURSUIT BEFORE THEY GET A CHOPPER IN THE AIR.
LIKE THIS.
U-SAVE
Porter Ave. 1/2 mile

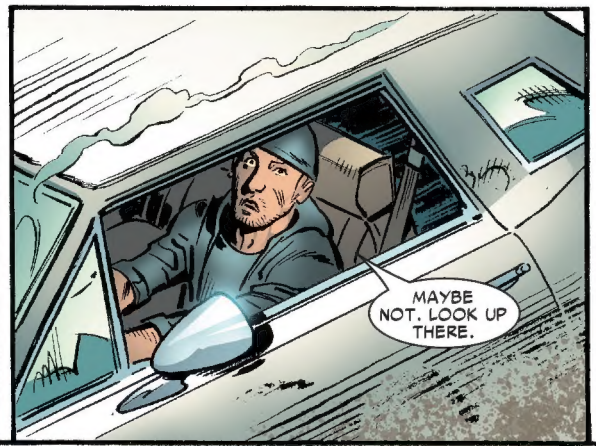

BRRRRRP-BRRRRRP!


NYPD
KRASH!


CRASH!

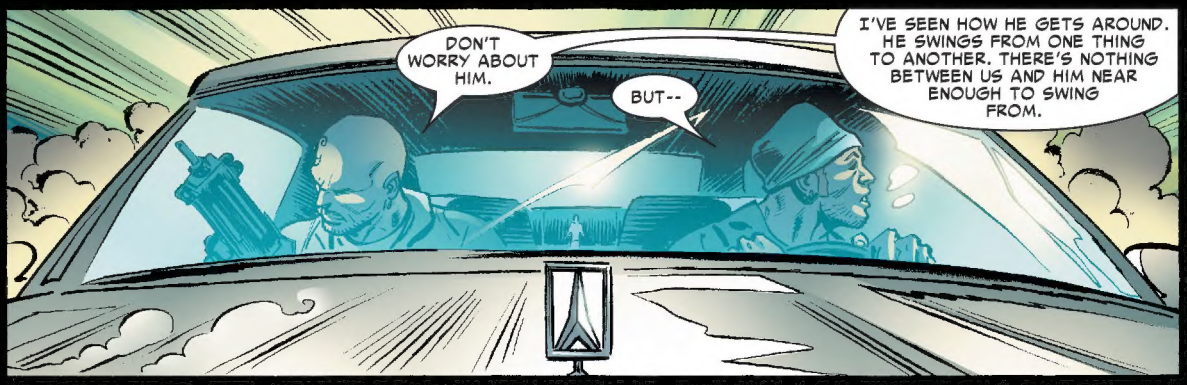
OKAY, NOW AS SOON AS WE GET INSIDE THE TUNNEL, JAM ON THE BRAKES. WE'LL GRAB ANOTHER CAR WHILE WE'RE OUT OF SIGHT, THEN DRIVE OUT IN A WHOLE OTHER CAR.
BEAUTY.
WHAT ABOUT THE CHICK IN THE TRUNK?

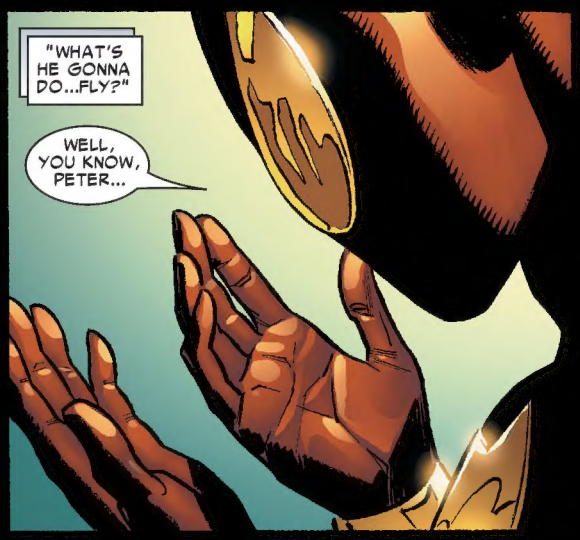

I TOLD YOU, JIMMY. NO WITNESSES.
WHEN WE DITCH THE CAR... SPRAY THE TRUNK. END OF PROBLEM.


MAYBE NOT. LOOK UP THERE.

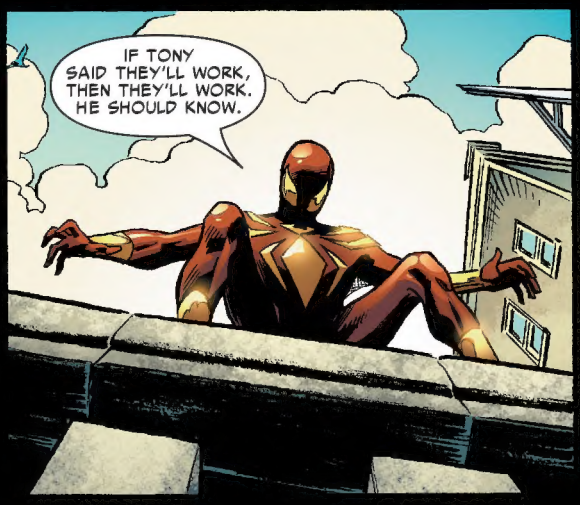
IT'S HIM.

"IT'S SPIDER-MAN."


DON'T WORRY ABOUT HIM.
BUT--
I'VE SEEN HOW HE GETS AROUND. HE SWINGS FROM ONE THING TO ANOTHER. THERE'S NOTHING BETWEEN US AND HIM NEAR ENOUGH TO SWING FROM.


"WHAT'S HE GONNA DO...FLY?"
WELL, YOU KNOW, PETER...

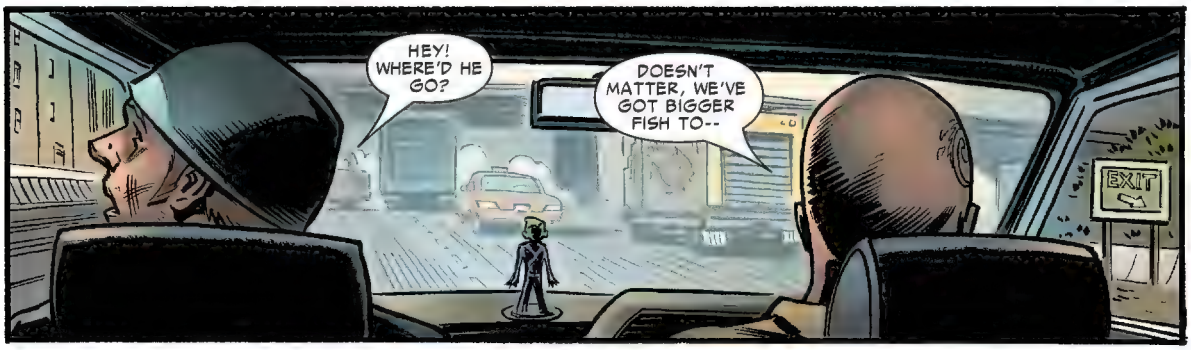
...SOME SPIDERS DO GLIDE. I'M SURE IT'LL BE SECOND NATURE.

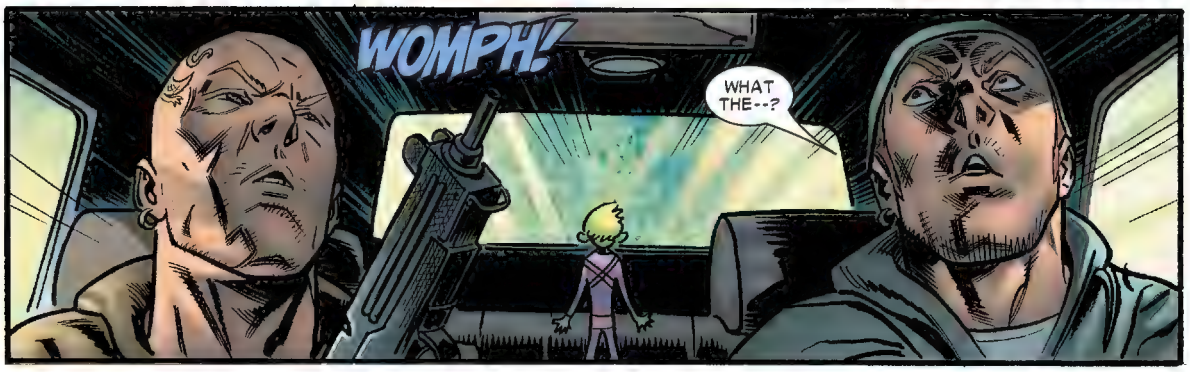

IF TONY SAID THEY'LL WORK, THEN THEY'LL WORK. HE SHOULD KNOW.

RUGS
UNLESS OF COURSE THIS IS SOME KIND OF ELABORATE SUPER-GUY VERSION OF "PULL MY FINGER"...

RENTS
855-7289
...HERE GOES NOTHINNNNNGGGGGG!

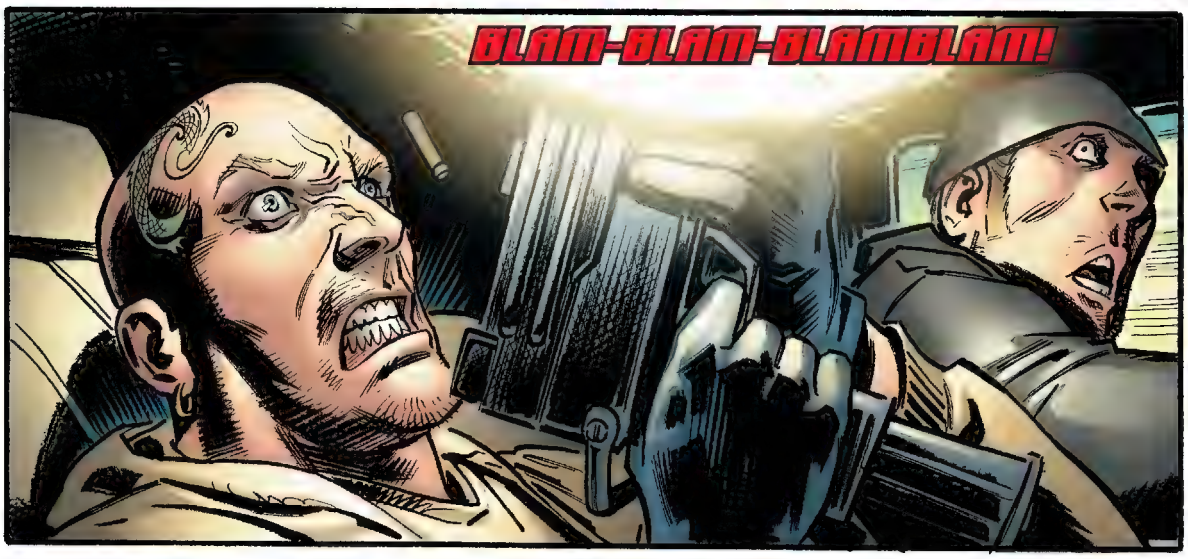
Open your arms, Peter. Open your arms. Open--
--your--
FLUTTER FLUTTER FLUTTER
YES!
WHUMPH!
XM5 ROCK
Sons


HEY! WHERE'D HE GO?
DOESN'T MATTER, WE'VE GOT BIGGER FISH TO--
EXIT


WOMPH!
WHAT THE--?

SCREEEEEE

HI, LISTEN, I LEFT MY CAR KEYS AT HOME, ANY CHANCE I COULD BUM A RIDE TO WORK WITH YOU GUYS?


BLAM-BLAM-BLAMBLAM!

DID YOU GET HIM?

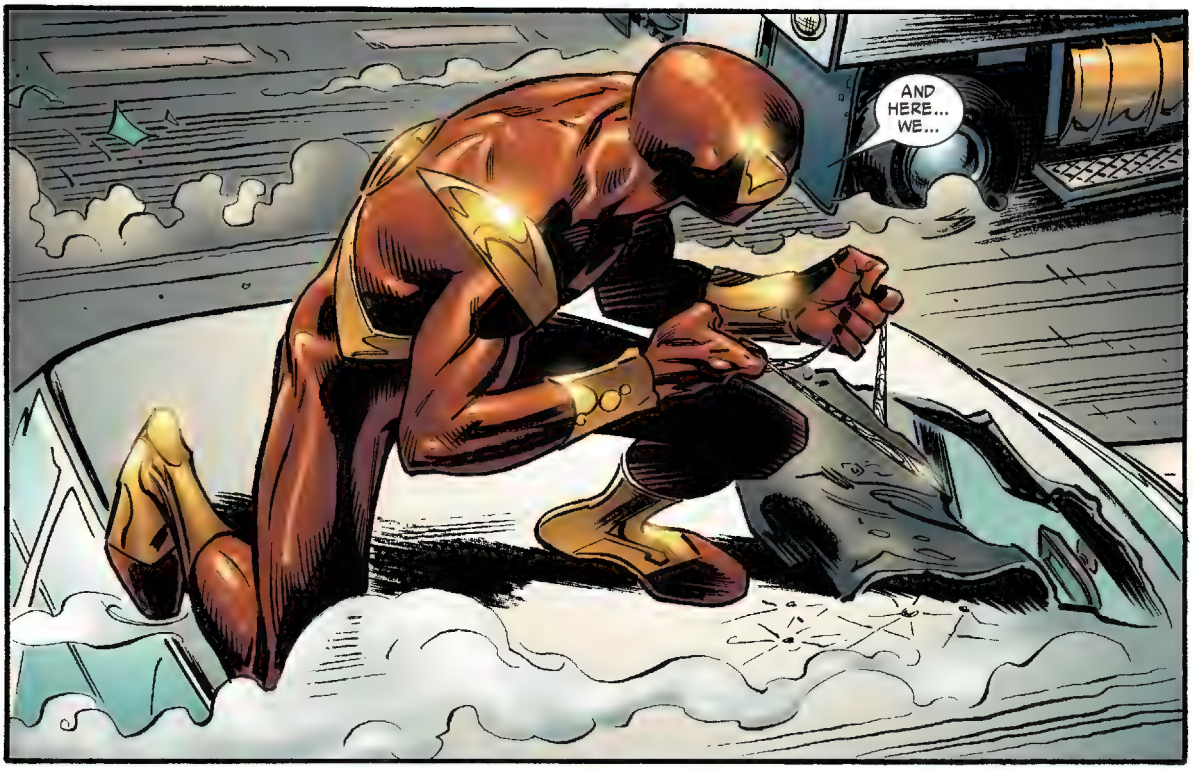
I DUNNO--
--I DON'T HEAR ANYTHING.

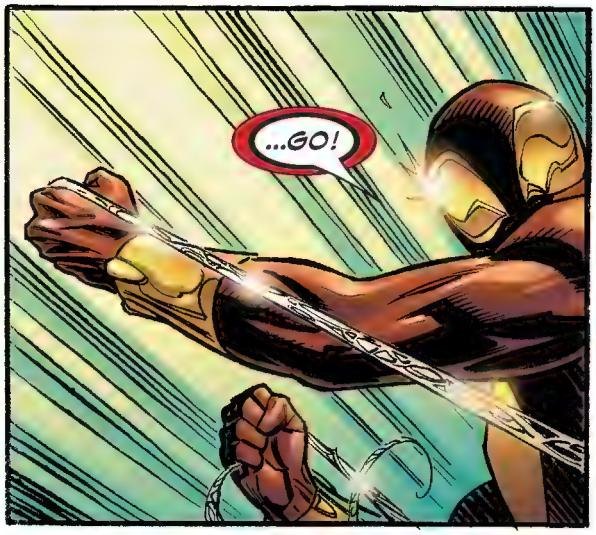
CONFIRMED, WE HAVE UNITS IN PLACE AT 59TH STREET EXIT IN CASE THE SUSPECTS TRY TO GET OFF THERE.

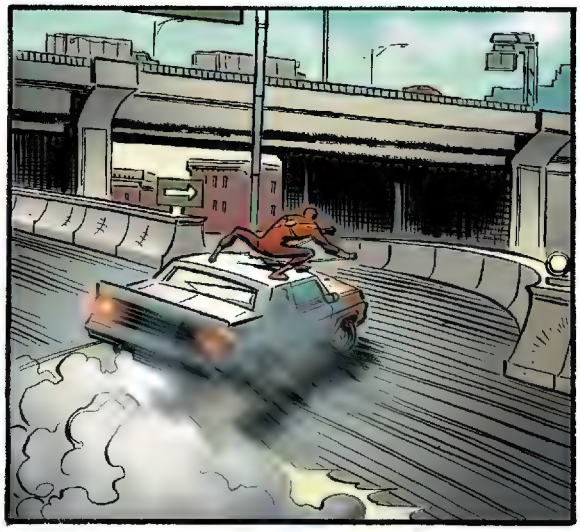
59th

MAYBE WE LOST HIM, WE--

HEY!


AND HERE... WE...


...GO!

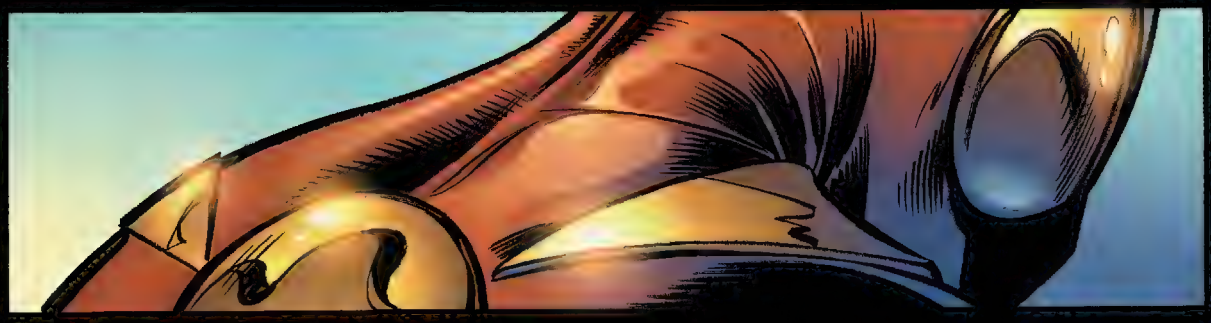


OOOF!
WATCH IT!
FEELIN' GROOVY...
BAD-1
OIL

HIT THE BRAKES! HIT THE BRAKES!
STOP
SQUEEEEEEEAAALLL
NO...NO WAY... I'M NOT GOING BACK TO PRISON, YOU HEAR ME?
I'M NOT GOING BACK!
NO!

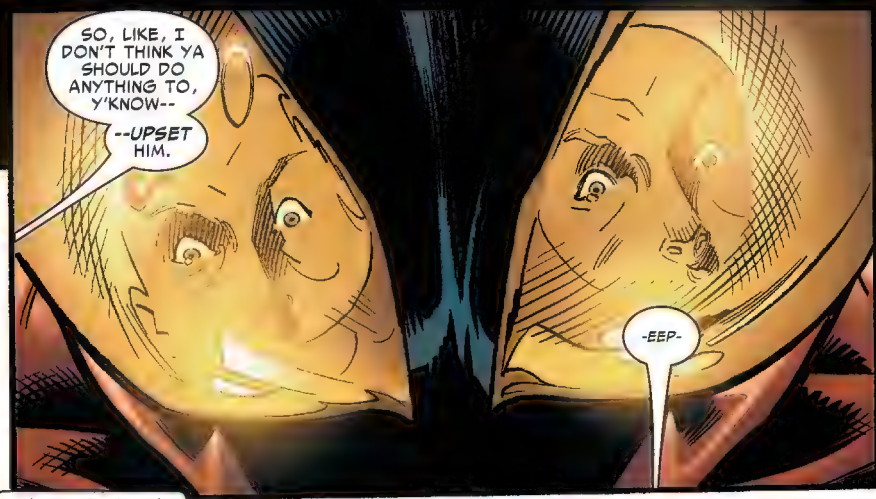
It was a rough landing, but the hostage should be--
--yes!
IT'S OKAY, MA'AM...YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
YOU'RE ALL RIGHT.
OKAY...NICE AND SLOW...KEEP YOUR HANDS WHERE WE CAN SEE THEM.
YOUR FAULT...IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT...
...IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT!

NO!
No time to get her clear--
BAM!
UNNNHHH!
YOU'RE TOO LATE! I KILLED--
--SPIDER-MAN...?

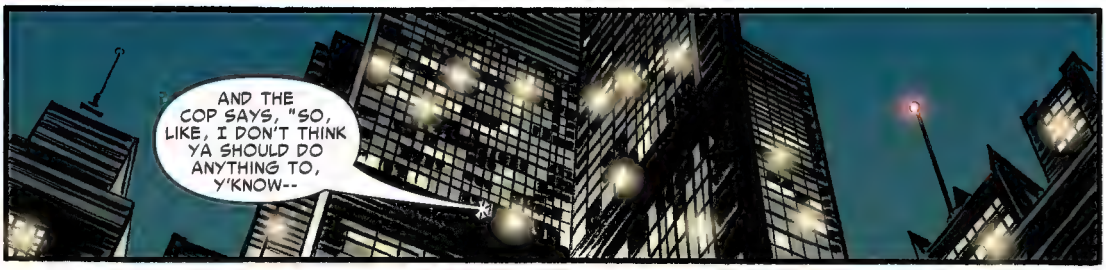


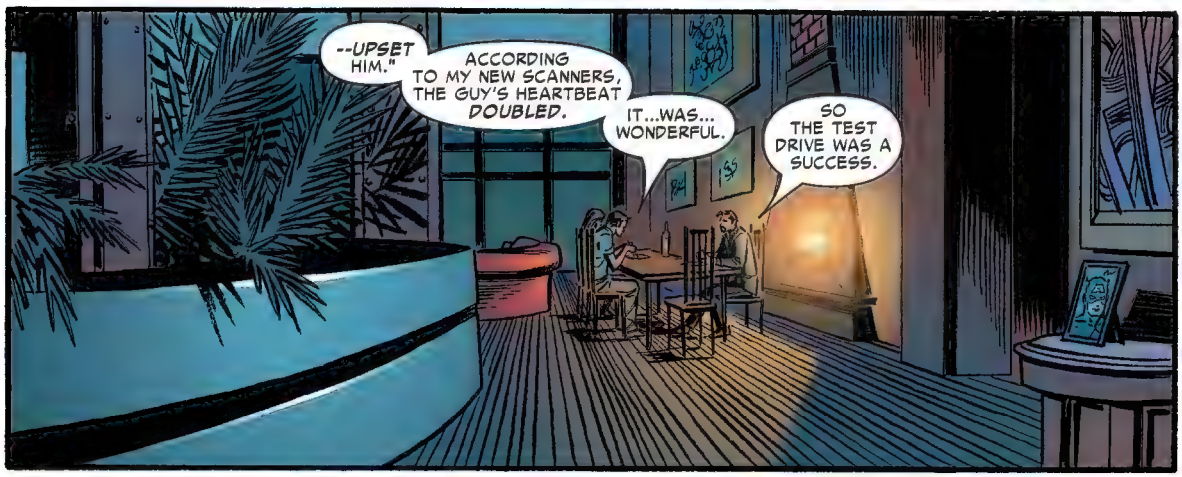
I DON'T GET IT...I'VE SEEN YOU GET HURT ON TV...YOU'RE NOT INVULNERABLE. THAT SHOULD'VE KILLED YOU!
LOOK, BUDDY, THERE'S A RUMOR GOING AROUND THE STATION ABOUT SOMETHING THAT WENT DOWN AT THE HOSPITAL... AND--
WELL, SOME OF THE GUYS ARE SAYING--

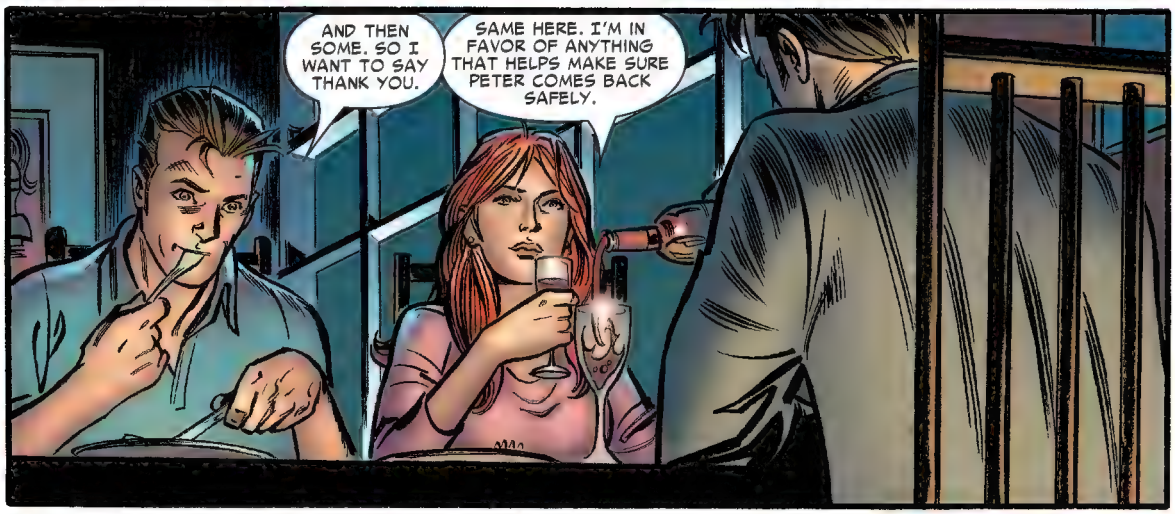
--THAT HE IS DEAD.


SO, LIKE, I DON'T THINK YA SHOULD DO ANYTHING TO, Y'KNOW--
--UPSET HIM.
-EEP-

The perfect end to the perfect day.
Except that I can't get "The 59th Street Bridge Song" out of my head.
Ah, well.
Dee-dee-dee, dee-dee-dee, feelin' groovy...


AND THE COP SAYS, "SO, LIKE, I DON'T THINK YA SHOULD DO ANYTHING TO, Y'KNOW--

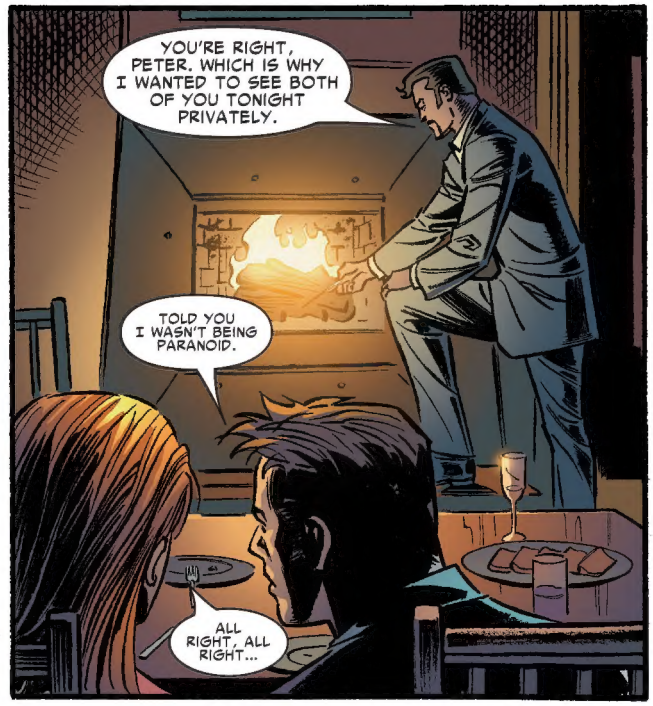

--UPSET HIM."
ACCORDING TO MY NEW SCANNERS, THE GUY'S HEARTBEAT DOUBLED.
IT...WAS... WONDERFUL.
SO THE TEST DRIVE WAS A SUCCESS.

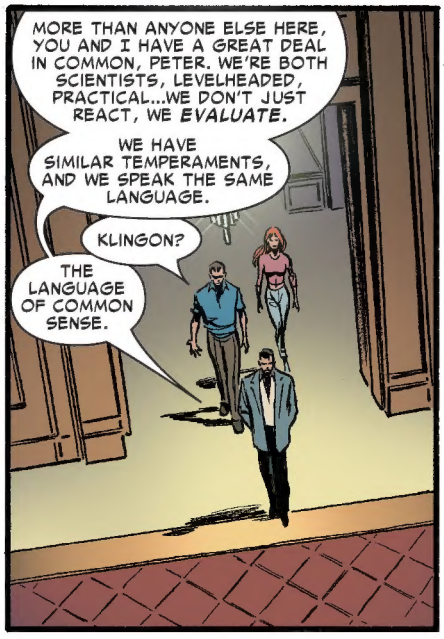

AND THEN SOME. SO I WANT TO SAY THANK YOU.
SAME HERE. I'M IN FAVOR OF ANYTHING THAT HELPS MAKE SURE PETER COMES BACK SAFELY.

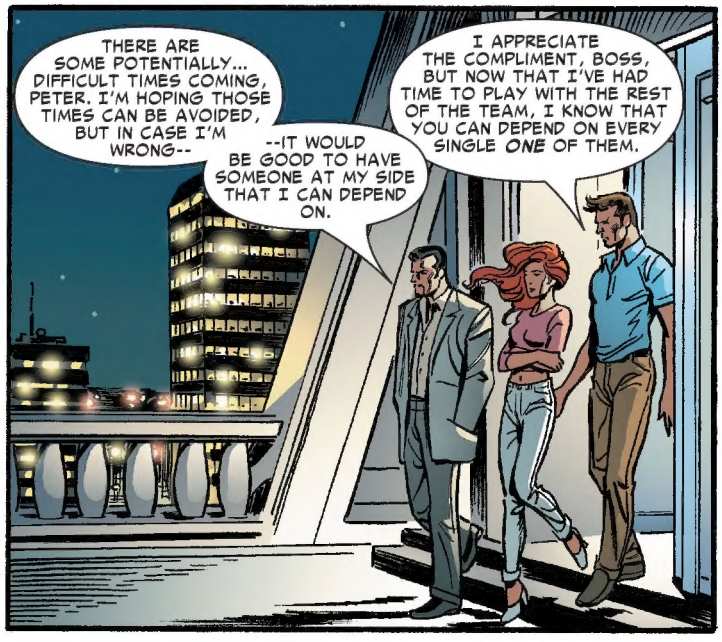
THEN YOU'RE MOST WELCOME.
THERE'S JUST ONE QUESTION I HAVE TO ASK.
AND THAT IS...?

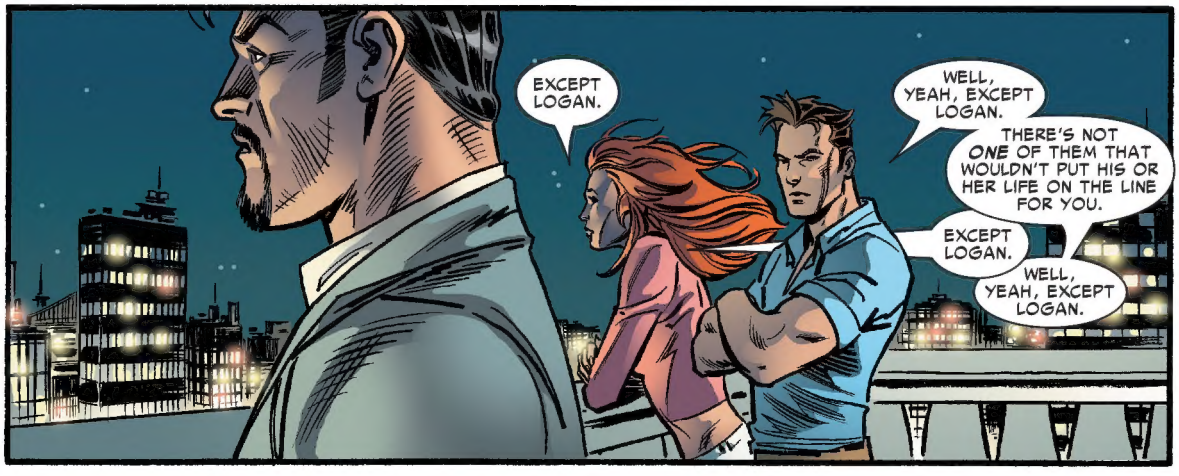
WHY?

WHY NOT? YOU WERE OUT OF UNIFORMS, YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH A LOT, I HAD THE PARTS LYING AROUND--
AND I APPRECIATE THAT, NO MISTAKE.
BUT I *KNOW* YOU NOW, I *KNOW* HOW YOU THINK AND I HAVE A SUSPICION THAT THERE'S MORE TO ALL THIS THAN HELPING ME ACCESSORIZE.


YOU'RE RIGHT, PETER. WHICH IS WHY I WANTED TO SEE BOTH OF YOU TONIGHT PRIVATELY.
TOLD YOU I WASN'T BEING PARANOID.
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT...


MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE HERE, YOU AND I HAVE A GREAT DEAL IN COMMON, PETER. WE'RE BOTH SCIENTISTS, LEVELHEADED, PRACTICAL...WE DON'T JUST REACT, WE *EVALUATE*.
WE HAVE SIMILAR TEMPERAMENTS, AND WE SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE.
KLINGON?
THE LANGUAGE OF COMMON SENSE.


THERE ARE SOME POTENTIALLY... DIFFICULT TIMES COMING, PETER. I'M HOPING THOSE TIMES CAN BE AVOIDED, BUT IN CASE I'M WRONG--
--IT WOULD BE GOOD TO HAVE SOMEONE AT MY SIDE THAT I CAN DEPEND ON.
I APPRECIATE THE COMPLIMENT, BOSS, BUT NOW THAT I'VE HAD TIME TO PLAY WITH THE REST OF THE TEAM, I KNOW THAT YOU CAN DEPEND ON EVERY SINGLE *ONE* OF THEM.


EXCEPT LOGAN.
WELL, YEAH, EXCEPT LOGAN.
THERE'S NOT *ONE* OF THEM THAT WOULDN'T PUT HIS OR HER LIFE ON THE LINE FOR YOU.
EXCEPT LOGAN.
WELL, YEAH, EXCEPT LOGAN.

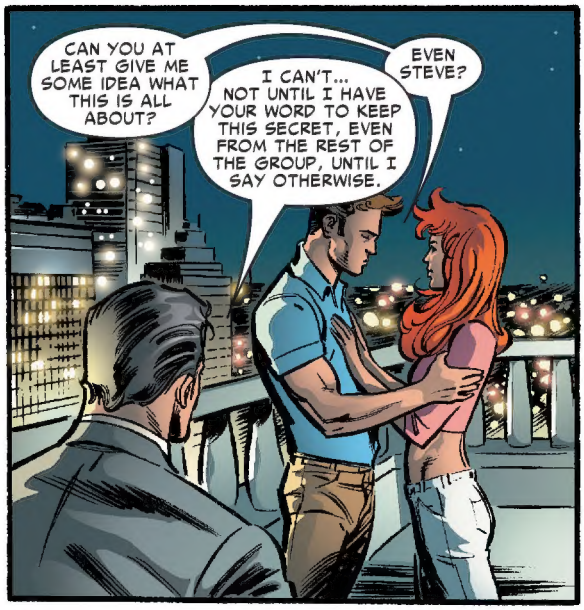
NORMALLY, I'D AGREE WITH YOU, BUT KNOWING WHAT I KNOW...I'M NOT SURE THAT'S GOING TO BE TRUE OVER THE LONG HAUL.
GOD, LET ME BE WRONG.
EVERY NIGHT, I GO TO SLEEP HOPING THAT I'M WRONG.

PETER, I'VE TAKEN A SPECIAL INTEREST IN YOU FROM THE DAY I INVITED YOU TO COME HERE. YOU, AND MJ, AND MAY, YOU'RE LIKE FAMILY TO ME.
THE ADDAMS FAMILY?
PETER--
THE MUNSTERS?

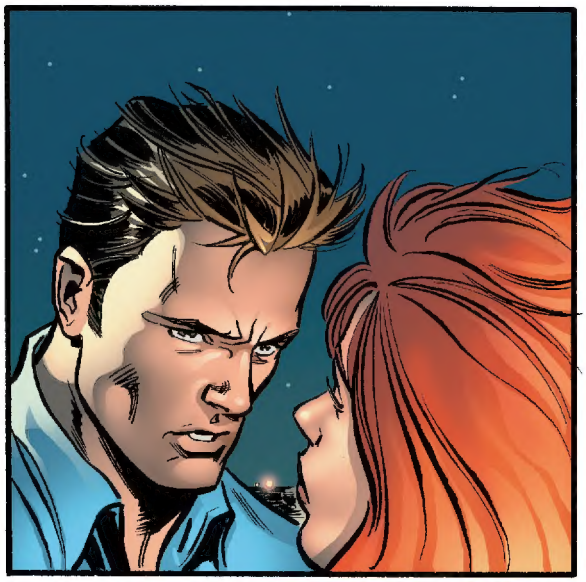
PETER... *LISTEN* TO ME.
I WANT TO HIRE YOU OUT IN THE OPEN, FULL-TIME, AS MY SECOND, MY PROTÉGÉ...I WANT YOU TO GO WHERE I GO, SEE WHAT I SEE, HEAR WHAT I HEAR.
I NEED SOMEONE I CAN TRUST IMPLICITLY TO BACK ME UP.

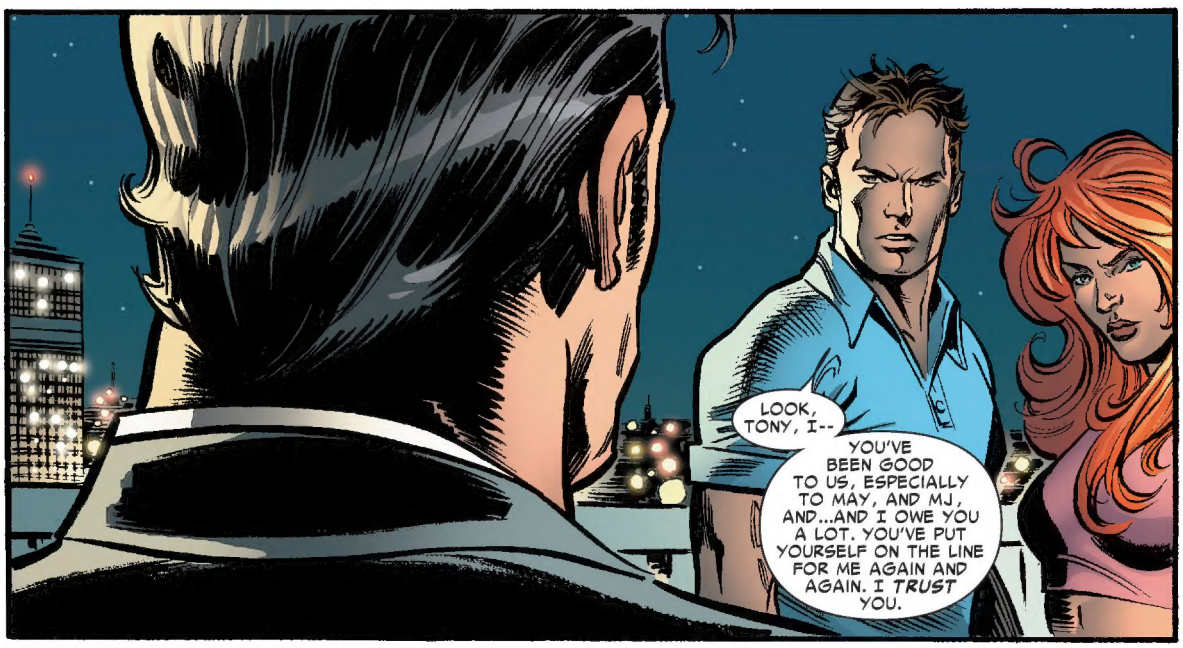
NOT TO PUT TOO FINE A POINT ON IT...I NEED YOUR HELP. AND YOUR WORD, THAT YOU'LL STICK WITH ME THROUGH WHAT'S COMING, NO MATTER WHAT.
SOUNDS LIKE A BLOOD OATH TO ME.
THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT IT IS, PETER.

IF YOU NEED SOME TIME TO THINK ABOUT IT, I UNDERSTAND.
NO, IT'S JUST--
IT'S YOUR CALL, PETER.

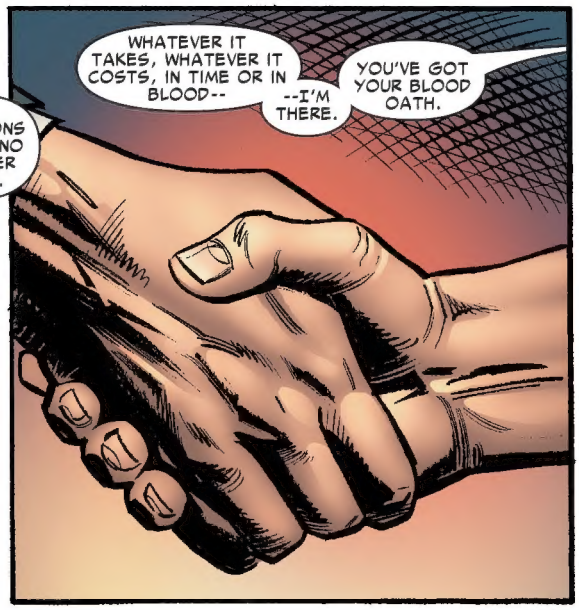

CAN YOU AT LEAST GIVE ME SOME IDEA WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT?
I CAN'T... NOT UNTIL I HAVE YOUR WORD TO KEEP THIS SECRET, EVEN FROM THE REST OF THE GROUP, UNTIL I SAY OTHERWISE.
EVEN STEVE?

YES.
EVEN STEVE.




LOOK, TONY, I--
YOU'VE BEEN GOOD TO US, ESPECIALLY TO MAY, AND MJ, AND...AND I OWE YOU A LOT. YOU'VE PUT YOURSELF ON THE LINE FOR ME AGAIN AND AGAIN. I *TRUST* YOU.

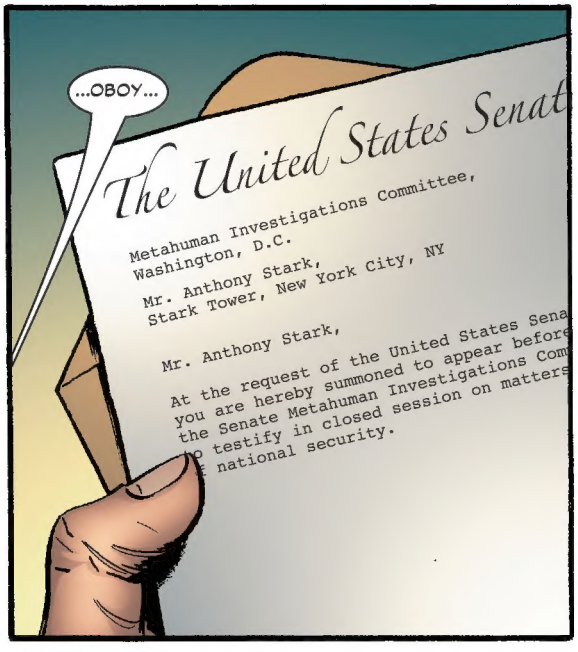
I TOOK A VOW A LONG TIME AGO TO HELP PEOPLE WHO NEEDED ME...AND TO BE THERE FOR THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THERE FOR ME.
NO QUESTIONS ASKED, NO QUARTER GIVEN.


WHATEVER IT TAKES, WHATEVER IT COSTS, IN TIME OR IN BLOOD--
--I'M THERE.
YOU'VE GOT YOUR BLOOD OATH.

THANK YOU, PETER. THAT MEANS A GREAT DEAL TO ME. A GREAT DEAL.
SO HERE'S A LITTLE READING MATERIAL TO GET YOU STARTED.

ONCE YOU'VE READ IT OVER, GIVE ME YOUR THOUGHTS. AND PACK YOUR BAGS--

--BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO WASHINGTON.


...OBOY...
The United States Senat
Metahuman Investigations Committee,
Washington, D.C.
Mr. Anthony Stark,
Stark Tower, New York City, NY
Mr. Anthony Stark,
At the request of the United States Sena
you are hereby summoned to appear before
the Senate Metahuman Investigations Com
to testify in closed session on matters
national security.